

# *Islamic Studies*

## Grade 12

Given the dire need for Islamic studies material in schools incorporating the subject in English, Darussalam has endeavoured to publish an Islamic Studies series covering all the grades, from grade one through grade twelve.

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## Publisher Note

All praise belongs to Allah; we praise Him and seek His help and forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evil within us and from our sinful deeds. Whomever Allah guides, there is none to misguide him; and whomever He leads astray, none can guide him. We bear witness that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah, and we bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger. We pray to Allah the Almighty to bestow His peace and blessings upon Prophet Muhammad, upon his good and pure family, as well as upon all the noble companions and those who follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgement.

Given the dire need for Islamic studies material in schools incorporating the subject in English, Darussalam has endeavoured to publish an Islamic Studies series covering all the grades, from grade one through grade twelve.

The present series covers all areas of Islamic studies: tafseer, hadeeth, tawheed, fiqh, seerah, and general etiquette relating to different areas and situations. Due to the importance of authentic Islamic knowledge, every effort has been made to ensure that the material presented in the series is authentic. Also, given the importance of Arabic Islamic terms, most of the terms are presented in their original Arabic script, along with the transliteration and the translation of their meanings. This also applies to supplications which have to be memorised in their Arabic version. The aim here is to help the student read the original text and understand its meaning. Each lesson is followed by exercises covering questions about the lesson.

One striking feature in the series is the colourful artwork used in it that certainly appeals to children. This is certainly bound



to attract the young readers' attention, stimulate them, amuse them as well as educate them, even though this feature is not stressed in books for the upper grades.

The series aims to acquaint the student with the teachings of Islam in every aspect: beliefs, practices and moral conduct. The series, with its unique features, certainly fills a gap in this area which has long been partially neglected.

The present breathtaking work was initiated by an expert in the field of education, Maulvi Abdul Aziz, MA. English literature, who has held different posts in the field including that of Senior Administrative Officer in the Department of Private Education, Ministry of Education, Dubai, UAE, from 1982 to 2002.

The current project also owes its existence in its present form to some people who made informative suggestions, particularly Larbi Benrezzouk, College of Languages and Translation, Imam Muhammad ibn Saud University, Riyadh, who undertook the painstaking task of checking the authenticity of the material presented in the series, proofreading the text as well as adding references to certain quotations from the Qur'an and the hadeeth. Special thanks also go to Mr. Sajid Chaudhary for proofreading in this addition and to Mr. Zulfiqar Mahmood who conscientiously applied his expertise in the field of graphic design to produce the series in a superb shape.

We pray to Almighty Allah to reward our endeavours and to make the present series abundantly beneficial to students in all stages of education as well as to any one who reads them.

Abdul Malik Mujahid  
Safar, 1432 AH.  
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## The Beginnings of Islam

### 1. Pre-Islamic Arabia

### 1.1. Social and Economic Conditions, Beliefs and Customs

#### *The Term Jaahiliyyah: What is Jaahiliyyah?*

The term *Jaahiliyyah*, which occurs in the Qur'an four times (3:154; 5:50; 33:33; and 48:26), comes from the Arabic root *j - h - l*, which means 'ignorance, lack of knowledge, to ignore, foolishness, quick temper and to be rash'. *Jaahiliyyah* is not merely ignorance, but rather, in the extreme sense, a state of mind that reflects the qualities of knowing the truth but stubbornly refusing to acknowledge it. It is to deliberately act against what is right, combined with stubbornness, argumentativeness, disrespect and total disregard for people's criticism.

Thus, the word *jahl* means ignorance, foolishness and stupidity, and its opposite is '*ilm*, or knowledge. The term is also used for having wrong beliefs about something as well as for not doing something as it ought to be performed. *Jaahiliyyah* indicates the state of things, the state of ignorance or the Age of Ignorance and is often used to refer





to paganism of the pre-Islamic period. To be more precise, *Jaahiliyyah* is the time of ignorance before the advent of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Arabia. The most decisive thing that one should realize here has to do with 'Allah'. Some people presume 'Allah' to be the Muslim God, but this is not true. In fact, Allah is the Arabic word for the same One God: the True One God of all.

*Jaahiliyyah* is commonly translated as the 'age of ignorance'; that is, ignorance of the Word of God. Therefore, it is relevant to understand the designation of *Jaahiliyyah* as referring to an age of recklessness and disregard for certain moral, spiritual and social values brought by Islam. In the Qur'an, the word *Jaahiliyyah* is used as the opposite of Islamic teachings and reforms.

The Islamic teachings are based on knowledge and guidance from Allah. Allah is the source of all knowledge as He taught Aadam ﷺ, the first human being, the names of all things. (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:31) In the pre-Islamic period, the way of life and laws were not based on reason or revelation but on whims, guesswork and superstitions. However, the Qur'an does not reject all good values prevalent in Arabia before the advent of Islam. Many practices were reformed and other good values, for example, generosity and hospitality were retained.

As a matter of fact, life in Arabia in the decades preceding Islam was by no means devoid of finer elements. The Arab civilization was no doubt stale and decadent, as it possessed no philosophy and no art whatsoever, with the sole example of poetry.

In Arabia, there were many towns, but each followed its own political system, which

was closer to being a *Shaykhdom*, rather than a kingdom. The major cities of those times were Makkah, Taa'if and Yathrib (to be called Madeenah later).

## 1.2. Makkah: History in Brief

Prophet Ibraaheem ﷺ migrated from Iraq to Syria, then from there to Egypt, carrying with him the message of the true One God—Allah ﷻ. Ibraaheem ﷺ was indeed a model. He was dutiful to Allah. He was a man of pure faith and was not at all an idolater (see *Soorat an-Nahl*, 16:120). His story of encounter with the idols and pagans of his time is well-known, and the Qur'an speaks of this in several places (See, for instance, *Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:258-260; *Soorat al-An'aam*, 6:74-81; *Soorat Maryam*, 19:46-48; and *Soorat al-Anbiyyaa'*, 21:51-70). As for his story of professing *tawheed* (Oneness of Allah) in Makkah, see *Soorat Ibraaheem*, 14:37 and *Soorat as-Saafaat*, 37:99 and 102.



Ibraaheem ﷺ was accompanied by his second wife Haajar (Hagar), Ismaa'eel's mother. His first wife was childless for a time.

Hagar bore him the first son, and he named him Ismaa'eel. Ibraaheem took her and her child to a place close to where the Sacred House is under a tree above the Zamzam well. There was no Makkah then and no inhabitants. There was no water either. Ibraaheem ﷺ left her with a small bag containing some dates and a waterskin<sup>1</sup> filled with water. As Ibraaheem ﷺ turned to leave, Hagar followed him and she asked him, 'Where are you going, leaving us in this deserted place?' She repeated the question several times but he would not turn to her. Finally, she asked, 'Has Allah commanded you to do this?' He replied, 'Yes'. She said, 'Then, surely, He will not abandon us.' And she returned.

Ibraaheem ﷺ continued until he was at a mountain path, from which he could not be seen. He turned towards the place and prayed:

Our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring in a valley without cultivation, by Your Sacred House, so that they may establish prayers. So make the hearts of some people incline towards them, and provide them with fruits so that they may give thanks. (*Soorat Ibraaheem*, 14:37)

The place is still barren as it was four thousand years ago. No trees bear any fruit there. All the fruits found in the city are brought to it from outside. This clearly shows that Prophet Ibraaheem's supplication was accepted. Consequently, we see the amazing spectacle that the Makkan markets are always laden with fruits of all varieties.

It was not too long before the water was exhausted. Both Hagar and her child were thirsty. It was especially painful for her

<sup>1</sup>- A waterskin is a container of skin for holding water.



to see the child writhe around in suffering. She climbed the nearest hill, called as-Safaa to see if she could spot someone. Not finding anyone, she lifted her robe a little and ran down across the length of the valley to climb another hill called al-Marwah to see if she could find a living soul. She found no one and she ran between the hills several times. Allah's Messenger ﷺ has told us that this is the origin of the *sa'ee* ritual in *hajj* and *'umrah*. At the end of the seventh round, angel Jibreel ﷺ came down. He used either his heel or wing to track down the source of the Zamzam spring and dug until the water began to gush out. Haajar began to put a hedge around the gushing water with some sand. As the water-level rose, she cupped her hands to collect it in her waterskin. The water kept gushing out steadily. She drank from it and continued to nurse her child. The angel told her, 'Do not be afraid of being abandoned. This is the House of the Lord, which the child and his father will build. Allah does not abandon his servants.'

While she held to the place, one of the families of Jurhum tribe from the Qahtaan of the Yemen happened to pass by. Finding that water was available there, they sought her permission to settle down. She placed



### 1.3. Social Conditions in Arabia during the Time of Ignorance

the condition that the spring of water would remain her property though they could draw from it. They agreed and later sent for the rest of the tribe to come and join them.

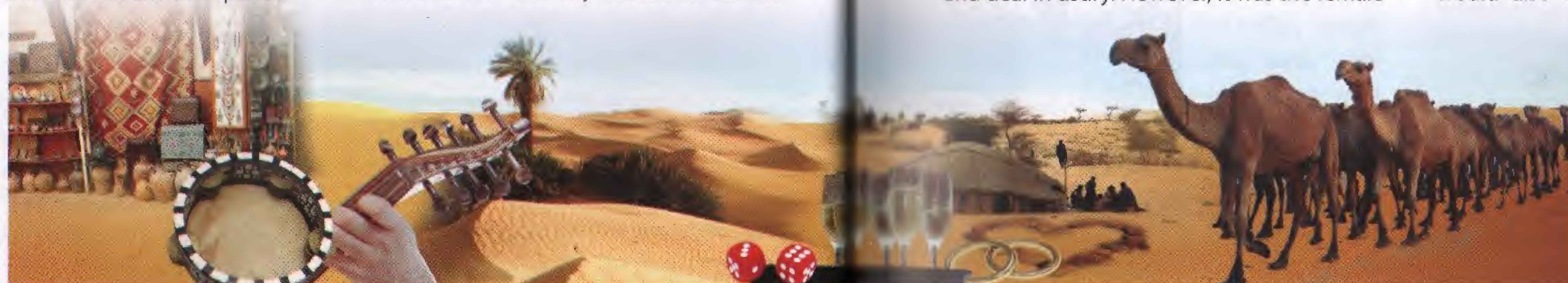
The never ceasing flow of Zamzam has never failed right up to this day, when millions of gallons of water are drawn every day with the help of several large power-driven pumps. The Zamzam is both water and food at the same time. It is good for whatever it is drunk for. If you drink it against thirst, Allah will slake your thirst. If you consider it food, Allah will satiate you. If you seek to be cured with it, Allah will certainly cure you.

Haajar's child grew into a handsome young man and learnt Arabic from members of Jurhum tribe. Soon they gave him one of their daughters in marriage. Ibraaheem ؑ visited them several times. In one of these visits, he asked Ismaa'eel ؑ to help him in building the House that Allah had ordered him to build. The House was built on a raised spot close to Zamzam, and Ismaa'eel continued to live next to it, by the side of his in-laws, the Jurhum among whom he had married. He was a truthful person as well as a messenger and a prophet (*Soorat Maryam*, 19:54). He had twelve sons. When he died, he was buried in the Hjr area by the side of his mother's grave. It is said that he lived for 137 years. It might also be pointed out that the Ibraaheemic period

is considered to be 1900 years before the advent of Prophet 'Eesaa (Jesus) ؑ.

In pre-Islamic Arabia communities took the form of a number of groups or tribes who were held together by loyalty to a leader or by descent from a common successor. The family units that made up the tribes were equal in status to each other. The chief of each family had power to select the tribal chief or *shaykh*, who normally came from certain families. Slavery was commonplace. Before the Prophet's time, slaves were either war captives or children of slaves or taken in raids in hostile territory.

Apart from a few oases and trading centres, the peninsula was desert and the way of life was nomadic or pastoral. Desert life was very harsh and uncompromising. It was often accompanied by grinding poverty. There was a strong temptation to lay hand on the belongings of others who were apparently wealthier. This usually took the form of raids in which there were strict rules laid down by the custom. Where possible, possessions were seized without loss of life. Killing carries severe penalties according to the tradition of the desert. The free Arabs were bound by no written law. No authority existed to enforce



law and order. Therefore, the only protection for any person's life was the fact that it would be bought dearly. Blood must be paid by blood: a life for a life. Retribution or vendetta was one of the pillars of Bedouin society.

In terms of culture, the Arabs admired people who possessed eloquence and who could argue their point of view in the tribal council. Wise men were highly respected, but poets were valued even more. The poets sang of love, grief, joy and sorrow. Contests were held in which each participant boasted of his own tribe and mocked those of his rivals.

Since the religion of the Arabs was idol-worship, which is against human nature, reason and logic, it was bound to create a social life that was essentially against the demands of nature, reason and logic. Excesses of all sorts were widespread: drinking, gambling, unlimited spouses, infanticide from fear of or as a result of poverty, killing of female children for reasons of a false sense of honour and eruption of wars for petty reasons! All these led to anarchy.

In many ways, the Arabs of the pre-Islamic times were loathsome in their manners and morals. They consumed great quantities of alcohol, gambled frequently and would shed blood for the most trivial reasons. They would devour the wealth of orphans, steal, fornicate and deal in usury. However, it was the female

slaves and fallen women who fornicated; free women were rarely guilty of that crime.

Some of the marriage practices prevalent among the common people were not much different from prostitution. Four kinds of marriages were prevalent among the pre-Islamic Arabs. One of them was similar to the one commonly prevalent. Another was lending one's wife. In this system a man had sex with a woman who had had no sex with her husband between two menstrual cycles. Following that, the husband would not go near her until he was sure whether or not she was pregnant from the person with whom she had sex. There was the group marriage in which a group of people, normally less than ten, assembled and had sex with a woman. When she became pregnant and delivered the child, she would send for them and designate one of them as the child's father. A fourth marriage was one in which a woman hoisted a flag on her house. A lot of people went to her and had sex with her. When she delivered a child, they hired a tracker who declared one of them nearest in resemblance to the child as the child's father. When Islam came, it declared all these practices unlawful except the first one.

In those days, people would take into marriage two real sisters at a time. A man would also marry the wives of his father at his death or when he divorced them. Divorce had no limit. Men would divorce any number of times, but Islam abolished this wrong practice. (See *Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:229)



## The Beginnings of Islam

### 2. Life of the Last Prophet ﷺ

#### 2.1. The Prophet's Birth: 'The Year of the Elephant'

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was born in Makkah on Monday morning, the 12th of *Rabee' al-Awwal*, in the Year of the Elephant, 571 CE, some fifty-five days after the unsuccessful expedition of Abrahah against Makkah.

Yemen at that time was under the rule of Ethiopia, and Abrahah was its governor. He built a grand cathedral in *San'aa'*, hoping to make it take the place of Makkah as the great place of pilgrimage for all Arabia. A man from Kinaanah, a large tribe of western Saudi Arabia in *Hijaz*, understood Abrahah's motive, so he went to *San'aa'* with the deliberate intention of defiling the church, which he did one night and returned safely to his people.

When Abrahah heard of this, he swore that he would raze the Ka'bah to the ground in revenge. Having made his preparations, he set off for Makkah with a large army of sixty thousand warriors, in the front of which he placed a colossal

elephant. His army included between nine to thirteen elephants. When Abrahah reached al-Muhassir Valley, between Muzdalifah and Mina, the elephant knelt down to the ground. Abrahah's soldiers did everything they possibly could to bring it to its feet, but it stubbornly refused to move. Whenever they directed it towards the north, south or east, the elephant would move quickly, but whenever they directed it towards Makkah it would

kneel down. This was the clearest of forewarnings for the army not to move one step forward, but Abrahah was blinded

by his ambition for the sanctuary he had built and his determination to destroy the Ka'bah. Had he and his army turned back, they would perhaps have escaped the great disaster. But it was too late.

Suddenly the western sky grew dark, and a strange sound was heard in the distance. Its volume gradually

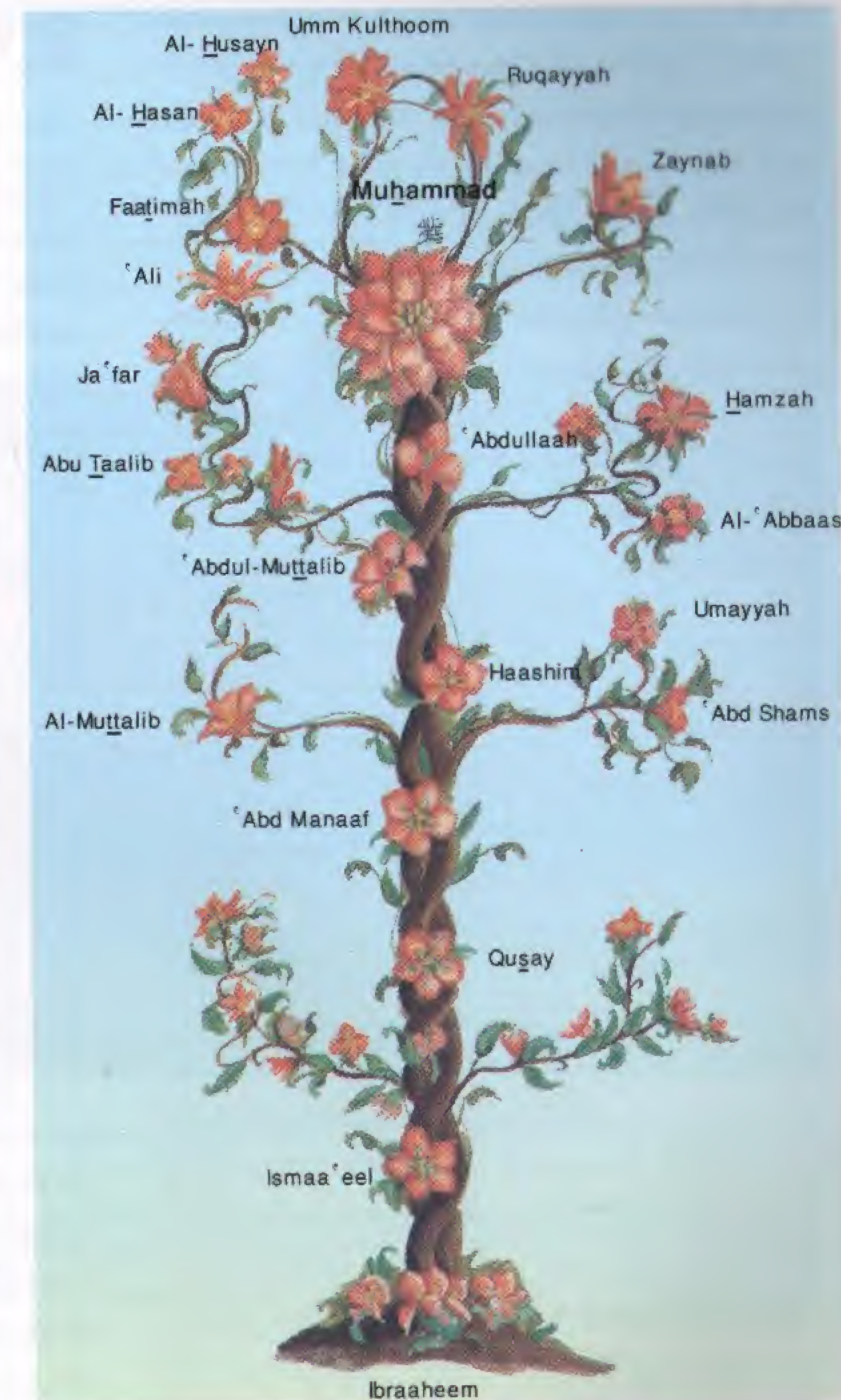


increased. A great wave of darkness arrived upon the army from the direction of the sea, and the air above them was full of birds which were very much like sparrows and swallows. Each bird had three pebbles the size of dried peas, one in its beak and each one of the other two between the claws of each foot.

They swooped to and fro over the army, pelting them as they did so. The pebbles were hard and they landed with such rapidity that they even pierced coats of mail. Every stone found its mark. Every pebble killed its man. As soon as a soldier was hit, his flesh would begin to rot. A large number of Abrahah's soldiers were killed in this way. Many others, Abrahah included, died soon after their return to *San'aa'*.

The Arabs attached great importance to this event. They dated their calendar from it, saying, 'This occurred in the Year of the Elephant', 'so-and-so was born in the Year of the Elephant' or 'this happened so many years after the Year of the Elephant'.

According to many scholars, this event took place in the year 571 of the Christian Calendar. According to others, however, it occurred in the year 570 CE. There is a difference of opinion among scholars concerning the exact date of the birth of the Prophet ﷺ. Some scholars maintain that he was born on the 9<sup>th</sup> *Rabee' al-Awwal* in the Year of the Elephant.



#### 2.2. The Prophet's Lineage and Ancestry

The Prophet's father was 'Abdullaah, and his mother was Aaminah, daughter of Wahb ibn 'Abd Manaaf. 'Abdul-Muttalib was his grandfather, and Abu Taalib was one of his uncles. The Prophet ﷺ was born among the best of tribes on earth and was of the best of lineage. His ancestry can be traced back to Prophet



## Coursework

1. (a) Why is the period leading up to the Prophet's birth in Arabia often described as *Jaahiliyyah* (period of ignorance)?  
(b) To what extent can this description be justified?
2. (a) Give an outline of the expansion of the Islamic empire in the period of the Rightly -Guided Caliphs.  
(b) Why did the Islamic empire expand so rapidly in this period?
3. (a) Examine the main religious beliefs and practices of the people of Makkah at the time of the Prophet's birth.  
(b) Explain how the Qur'anic teachings criticise any **two** of these beliefs and practices.
4. Discuss the significance of the event of the *Hijrah* to Madeenah in the development of Islam.
5. Give a critical assessment of the main events in the caliphates of:
  - (a) Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq ﷺ
  - (b) 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan ﷺ
  - (c) 'Ali ibn Abee Ṭaalib. ﷺ

6. Explain how the Prophet's response to the main events during the early period of Islam in Makkah testifies that he was truly Allah's Messenger.
7. Explain how the policies followed by the Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs:
  - (a) continued, and
  - (b) expanded the policies and teachings of the Prophet ﷺ.
8. (a) Describe in detail the main persecutions suffered by the Prophet ﷺ and his followers in Makkah.  
(b) Explain how the Prophet ﷺ reacted to these persecutions.
9. Give reasons why the following events are significant in the development of the early Muslim community:
  - (a) the Battle of Badr
  - (b) the Battle of Uḥud
  - (c) the Treaty of al-Ḥudaybiyyah
  - (d) the Fall of Makkah.
10. Discuss the main reasons why the Prophet ﷺ faced fierce opposition in Makkah during the early days of his Prophethood.